CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A computerized method of defining and valuing legal research instructions and specifications, and of ordering and pricing legal research, for an electronic legal research ordering and pricing system, comprising the steps of:

receiving and storing in an electronic legal research ordering and pricing server primary legal research instruction and specification categories that identify essential legal research parameters;

receiving and storing in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server sub-categories within each primary legal research instruction and specification category;

receiving and storing in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server specific legal research instructions and specifications;

setting each said sub-category and each said legal research instruction and specification as either a categorical guide or a legal research option that can be selected by a purchaser client;

receiving and storing in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server a numerical value for each legal research option that can be selected by said purchaser client when ordering legal research;

receiving and storing in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server price ranges that correspond to the said numerical values;

receiving and storing in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server delivery time and means options that can be selected by a purchaser client and prices for said options;

organizing and displaying said legal research instruction and specification primary categories, sub-categories, options and delivery time and means options for viewing and selection by a purchaser client in placing a legal research order;

receiving and storing in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server the legal research instruction and specification options selected by said purchaser client in placing a legal research order;

receiving and storing in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server the legal research delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client in placing a legal research order;

receiving and storing in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server the legal issue to be researched, as stated by said purchaser client in placing a legal research order;

calculating the total numerical value of the legal research order placed by said purchaser client by totaling the numerical values stored in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server for each legal research instruction and specification option selected by said purchaser client;

calculating an interim price for the legal research order placed by said purchaser client by identifying the price range stored in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server that corresponds to the said total numerical value for the legal research order placed by said purchaser client;

calculating the final price of the legal research order placed by said purchaser client by adding to or deducting from said interim price the stored price associated with the delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client in placing a legal research order;

organizing and displaying a summary of the legal research instruction and specification options and the delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client, together with the said final price for the legal research order, for viewing and purchase by said purchaser client

organizing and conveying to a legal research provider a summary of the legal research instruction and specification options and the delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client, together with the said final price for the legal research order and customer and payment information, for use in fulfilling said order.

2.   A computerized method of defining and valuing legal research instructions and specifications, and of ordering and pricing legal research, as defined in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

editing said legal research instruction and specification categories, sub-categories and options;

editing said setting of legal research categorical guides and legal research options;

editing said setting of numerical values for said legal research options,

editing said setting of corresponding price ranges;

editing said delivery time and means options and prices

3.   A computerized method of defining and valuing legal research instructions and specifications, and of ordering and pricing legal research, as defined in claim 1,

wherein the primary legal research instruction and specification option categories are type of analysis, controlling law, forum, sources of law, subject matter and type of research.

4. A computerized method of defining and valuing legal research instructions and specifications, and of ordering and pricing legal research, as defined in claim 1,

wherein said delivery time and means prices are percentage adjustments made to said price ranges that correspond to the numerical value of selected legal research options, and;

wherein the said final price is reached by making said percentage adjustment to the said interim price based upon the stored and selected delivery time and means percentage adjustments.

5. A computerized method of defining and valuing legal research instructions and specifications, and of ordering and pricing legal research, as defined in claim 1,

wherein discounts and premiums corresponding to the number and type of orders placed and number and type of services requested are received and stored in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server, and;

wherein the said final price is further adjusted to reflect said stored discounts and premiums.

6. A computerized method of defining and valuing legal research instructions and specifications, and of ordering and pricing legal research, as defined in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

modifying the legal research order placed by the purchaser client by allowing said purchaser client to select or deselect legal research instruction and specification options,

modifying the legal research order placed by the purchaser client by allowing said purchaser client to select or deselect delivery time and means options;

recalculating the said interim and final prices based upon said modifications made by the purchaser client.

7. A computerized method of defining and valuing legal research instructions and specifications, and of ordering and pricing legal research, as defined in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

accepting and storing more than one legal research order at a time by said purchaser client and calculating a price for the entire order to include the price for all legal research orders placed;

accepting and storing the deletion of one or more of several legal research orders by said purchaser client and recalculating the price for the entire order to include the price for all legal research orders placed.

8. A computer-readable storage medium encoded with executable instructions constituting a program for defining and valuing legal research instructions and specifications, and of ordering and pricing legal research, for an electronic legal research ordering and pricing system, wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform a method comprising the following steps:

receiving and storing primary legal research instruction and specification categories that identify essential legal research parameters;

receiving and storing sub-categories within each primary legal research instruction and specification category;

receiving and storing specific legal research instructions and specifications;

setting each said sub-category and each said legal research instruction and specification as either a categorical guide or a legal research option that can be selected by a purchaser client;

setting a numerical value for each legal research option that can be selected by said purchaser client when ordering legal research;

setting price ranges that correspond to the said numerical value of legal research options selected by said purchaser client for a legal research order;

receiving and storing delivery time and means options that can be selected by a purchaser client and prices for said options;

organizing and displaying said legal research instruction and specification primary categories, sub-categories, options and delivery time and means options for viewing and selection by a purchaser client in placing a legal research order

receiving and storing the legal research instruction and specification options selected by said purchaser client in placing a legal research order;

receiving and storing the legal research delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client in placing a legal research order;

receiving and storing the legal issue to be researched, as stated by said purchaser client in placing a legal research order;

calculating the total numerical value of the legal research order placed by said purchaser client by totaling the numerical values stored in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server for each legal research instruction and specification option selected by said purchaser client;

calculating an interim price for the legal research order placed by said purchaser client by identifying the price range stored in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server that corresponds to the said total numerical value for the legal research order placed by said purchaser client;

calculating the final price of the legal research order placed by said purchaser client by adding to or deducting from said interim price the stored price associated with the delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client in placing a legal research order;

organizing and displaying a summary of the legal research instruction and specification options and the delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client, together with the said final price for the legal research order, for viewing and purchase by said purchaser client;

organizing and conveying to a legal research provider a summary of the legal research instruction and specification options and the delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client, together with the said final price for the legal research order and customer and payment information, for use in fulfilling said order.

9. A computer-readable storage medium encoded with executable instructions constituting a program as defined in claim 8, causing the computer to perform a method comprising the further steps of:

editing said legal research instruction and specification categories, sub-categories and options;

editing said setting of legal research categorical guides and legal research options,

editing said setting of numerical values for said legal research options;

editing said setting of corresponding price ranges

editing said delivery time and means options and prices

10. A computer-readable storage medium encoded with executable instructions constituting a program as defined in claim 8,

wherein the primary legal research instruction and specification option categories are type of analysis, controlling law, forum, sources of law, subject matter and type of research.

11. A computer-readable storage medium encoded with executable instructions constituting a program as defined in claim 8,

wherein said delivery time and means prices are percentage adjustments made to said price ranges that correspond to the numerical value of selected legal research options, and;

wherein the said final price is reached by making said percentage adjustment to the said interim price based upon the stored and selected delivery time and means percentage adjustments.

12. A computer-readable storage medium encoded with executable instructions constituting a program as defined in claim 8,

wherein discounts and premiums corresponding to the number and type of orders placed and number and type of services requested are received and stored in said electronic legal research ordering and pricing server, and;

wherein the said final price is further adjusted to reflect said stored discounts and premiums.

13. A computer-readable storage medium encoded with executable instructions constituting a program as defined in claim 8, causing the computer to perform a method comprising the further steps of:

modifying the legal research order placed by the purchaser client by allowing said purchaser client to select or deselect legal research instruction and specification options;

modifying the legal research order placed by the purchaser client by allowing said purchaser client to select or deselect delivery time and means options,

recalculating the interim and final prices based upon said modifications made by said purchaser client.

14. A computer-readable storage medium encoded with executable instructions constituting a program as defined in claim 8, causing the computer to perform a method comprising the further steps of:

accepting more than one legal research order at a time by the purchaser client and calculating a total price for all legal research orders placed;

accepting the deletion of one or more of several legal research orders by the purchaser client and calculating a total price for all legal research orders placed.

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15. An electronic legal research ordering and pricing server, connected through a network to a legal research provider using a computer, a legal research purchaser using a purchaser client, and a settlement organization, comprising:

means of receiving and storing in a database legal research instruction and specification primary categories, sub-categories and specific instructions and options defined by said legal research provider;

means of receiving and storing in a database numerical values assigned by said legal research provider to said legal research instruction and specification options;

means of receiving and storing in a database price ranges assigned by said legal research provider to said numerical values;

means of receiving and storing in a database delivery time and means options defined by said legal research provider and prices assigned by said legal research provider to said delivery time and means options;

means of receiving display request information from said purchaser client and generating, organizing and displaying to the purchaser client said stored legal research instruction and specification primary categories, sub-categories and specific instructions and options and delivery time and means options;

means of receiving and storing in a database the legal research instruction and specification options and legal research delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client when placing a legal research order, including a statement of the issue to be researched,

means of calculating the total value for a legal research order placed by said purchaser client by accessing and totaling the stored numerical values assigned by said legal research provider to each stored legal research instruction and specification option selected by said purchaser client;

means of calculating an interim price for the legal research order placed by said purchaser client by accessing and identifying the stored price range assigned by said legal research provider that corresponds to the said total numerical value for the legal research order placed by said purchaser client;

means of calculating the final price of the legal research order placed by said purchaser client by adding to or deducting from said interim price the stored price assigned by said legal research provider for the delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client;

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means of generating, organizing and displaying to said purchaser client a summary of the legal research instruction and specification options and the delivery time and means options selected by said purchaser client, together with the said final price for the legal research order;

means of receiving input and authorization from said purchaser client to place said legal research order, and means for receiving and storing the purchaser's identification and transaction information;

means of requesting a settlement organization connected to said network to complete the initiated transaction;

means of generating and conveying to a legal research provider for each legal research order a summary of the legal research instruction and specification options and delivery time and means options selected by the purchaser client, legal issue stated by the purchaser client, final price for each order and customer and payment information, so the order can be fulfilled.

16. An electronic legal research ordering and pricing server, as defined in claim 15, further comprising means of:

editing said legal research instruction and specification categories, sub-categories and options;

editing said setting of legal research categorical guides and legal research options;

editing said setting of numerical values for said legal research options;

editing said setting of corresponding price ranges

editing said delivery time and means options and prices.

17. An electronic legal research ordering and pricing server, as defined in claim 15,

wherein the primary legal research instruction and specification option categories are type of analysis, controlling law, forum, sources of law, subject matter and type of research.

18. An electronic legal research ordering and pricing server, as defined in claim 15,

wherein said delivery time and means prices are percentage adjustments made to said price ranges that correspond to the numerical value of selected legal research options, and;

wherein there are means of reaching the said final price by making said percentage adjustment to the said interim price based upon the stored and selected delivery time and means percentage adjustments.

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19. An electronic legal research ordering and pricing server, as defined in claim 15,

wherein there are means of receiving and storing discounts and premiums corresponding to the number and type of orders placed and number and type of services requested, and;

wherein there are means of adjusting the said final price to reflect said stored discounts and premiums.

20. An electronic legal research ordering and pricing server, as defined in claim 15, further comprising means of:

modifying the legal research order placed by the purchaser client by allowing said purchaser client to select or deselect legal research instruction and specification options;

modifying the legal research order placed by the purchaser client by allowing said purchaser client to select or deselect delivery time and means options;

recalculating the interim and final prices based upon said modifications of said legal research and specification options and said delivery time and means options.

21. An electronic legal research ordering and pricing server, as defined in claim 15, further comprising means of:

accepting more than one legal research order at a time by the purchaser client and recalculating the total price to include the price for all legal research orders placed;

accepting the deletion of one or more of several legal research orders by the purchaser client and recalculating the total price to include the price for all legal research orders placed.